

20 January 2006

Diana Holloway  
Seattle Department of Transportation  
Seattle Municipal Tower  
PO Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996

Dear Ms. Holloway,

Thank you for attending the Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board meeting on December 14, 2005 to present the Aurora Avenue North corridor improvement project. The Board was pleased to hear of the proposed pedestrian improvements along the Aurora corridor between N. 110<sup>th</sup> St and N. 145<sup>th</sup> St. This project offers a unique opportunity to create pedestrian improvements to support the long-term success of this transit and business corridor.

The Board is pleased to see a significant amount of landscaping included in the initial alignment design. Landscaping, such as trees and bushes, creates physical, visual, and audio buffers between the pedestrian and auto environments which significantly improve the quality of experience for pedestrians traveling the corridor. We are concerned by requests to eliminate landscaping in the amenity zone and center median to prevent illegal activity. The Board feels this in fact prevents only a symptom of crime and is not a true measure of crime prevention. An increase in pedestrian activity along the corridor, fostered by an improved user experience provided by the landscaping and improved transit service, will do more to prevent crime than the absence of landscaping that shelters illegal activities. In a long term view, the failure to install landscaping won't prevent crime to the same degree as an increase in pedestrian activity.

Auto-oriented businesses have a place in this city, and Aurora Avenue serves a vital purpose in providing an appropriate environment for auto-oriented businesses. At the same time, Aurora Avenue is also a major transit corridor. The proposed pedestrian improvements along this transit corridor support and reinforce transit investments being made in Business Access & Transit lanes. The Board supports the focused investment in high-quality pedestrian improvements around transit hubs to support walk-to-transit access while maintaining the needed auto-oriented businesses along Aurora. The Board also supports driveway and access management along the corridor with minimal disruption to the auto-oriented businesses.

Based on your presentation, Aurora and 145<sup>th</sup> is considered a "gateway" and Aurora and 130<sup>th</sup> is considered an "Urban Village." According to the City's Comprehensive Plan, Urban Villages support increased walking and transit use. In these areas, the Board recommends providing a wider pedestrian zone (sidewalk greater than 5 feet) to accommodate the increased pedestrian and transit activity.

It is our understanding that the Aurora project will be phased over time as additional funding becomes available. The Board supports prioritizing segments based on accident locations and pedestrian activity levels.

Thank you again for briefing the Pedestrian Advisory Board on the Aurora Avenue North corridor improvement project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jodie Vice". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jodie" and the last name "Vice" clearly distinguishable.

Maria Koengeter, Member  
Jodie Vice, Chair  
Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board